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FM AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2609
INFO RUEHXX/ARAB ISRAELI COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS JERUSALEM 002309

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE
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NEA FOR FRONT OFFICE; NEA/IPA FOR
WILLIAMS/GREENE/WATERS/WAECHTER; NSC FOR
ABRAMS/DORAN/LOGERFO; TREASURY FOR NUGENT/DOWNARD; USAID
FOR BORODIN

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PHUM](#) [ECON](#) [EAID](#) [PGOV](#) [KWBG](#)
SUBJECT: RISING TENSIONS AS PUBLIC HEALTHCARE WORKERS
PROTEST LACK OF SALARIES IN THE WEST BANK

REF: JERUSALEM 2245

¶1. (SBU) According to Palestinian daily Al-Ayyam, public healthcare workers took to the streets in separate, uncoordinated protests in Bethlehem, Nablus, and Ramallah June 6. Al-Ayyam reported that the protesters hailed from various health institutions and marched informally, carrying signs that called on the PA to pay their salaries and on the international community to resume assistance to the PA.

¶2. (SBU) A Bethlehem doctor from a private clinic reported to EconOff June 8 that the protests in Bethlehem did not reach the level of an organized strike. He said the protest was precipitated by a confrontation between a doctor at Beit Jala hospital and a patient's family who beat up the doctor when he refused to provide priority treatment for the patient. In response, his colleagues at the hospital gathered with healthcare workers from nearby hospitals and clinics to protest their increased patient caseload and lack of salary payments.

¶3. (SBU) Al-Ayyam reported that tens of protesters in Nablus called for their salaries to be paid and asked local banks not to surrender to international pressure, but to deal with the PA. International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) health field officer told EconOff June 8 that he had visited Rafidi hospital in Nablus June 6 and had not heard of the strikes, noting that the hospital was operating normally. The Al-Ayyam article also noted that public healthcare workers in Ramallah had marched from the Ramallah Governmental hospital to downtown Ramallah, calling for the PA to pay their salaries.

¶4. (SBU) Comment: It does not appear that these protests were coordinated. While there were reports of some delays at a few healthcare facilities, most operations continued as normal. End Comment.
WALLES